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## ON THE OCEAN.

*From the "Yiddish" of M. Rosenfeld.*

THE storm-wind has risen: he flies in his wrath  
To fight with a ship far away on the main,  
But brave and undaunted, she holds on her path,  
And ploughs through the waters, her timbers astrain.

Deep calls unto deep, ever more and more loud—  
How rattles the cordage, how quivers the sail,  
As they wrestle together, embittered and proud,  
In life and death combat, the ship and the gale!

Now high on the crest of the wave is she toss'd,  
Now sinks down engulfed in the foam and the spray,  
Now backwards, now forwards, her reckoning lost,  
The sport of the billows, that leap for their prey.

The ocean roars fiercely with thundering sound,  
Its depths, black as midnight, they howl and they hiss;  
The storm rages wildly above and around,  
Below opens wide the unfathomed abyss.

Now prayers, lamentations and wailings arise,  
For great is the danger and direful the need;  
And each to his God in his agony cries,  
From death and the terror of death to be freed.

Then shrieks and confessions of sin fill the air,  
The women lament and the little ones weep,  
And body and soul sink in hopeless despair  
And dread of the terrible scourge of the deep.

But down in the steerage two men sit apart,  
Untroubled by danger, unshaken by fear,  
Unheeding the peril that chills ev'ry heart,  
As though sea and heaven were placid and clear.

They look undismayed upon death face to face,  
Unmoved by the tempest's all-conquering might.  
It seems as though death, in his icy embrace,  
Had clasped them and reared them in darkness and night.

"Now tell us what manner of men you may be,  
Who wait thus in silence your terrible doom,  
Who sigh not and fear not and weep not to see,  
Dark opening before you the gates of the tomb?"

"Say, is it the grave that has given you birth?  
And is there no creature remaining to weep—  
No father, no mother, no children, no wife—  
When you sink to your rest in the pitiless deep?"

"What, have you no home, where you fain would return,  
No fatherland dear, where you first drew your breath,  
That life with its hopes and its gladness you spurn,  
And wait, calm and still, for the shadow of death?"

"What, have you no Saviour in heaven above,  
To call on in sorrow and desperate strait,  
No faith to uphold you, no people to love—  
Forsaken and wretched ones, what is your fate?"

Dark lowers the abyss and the billows gleam white,  
The lofty masts bend 'neath the stress and the strain,  
Still loud and more loud howls the wind in its might,  
And, weeping, then answereth one of the twain:

"The black realm of death has not given us birth,  
Nor yet was our cradle the grave deep and bare;  
A mother belovèd, an angel on earth,  
She bore us, and reared us with tenderest care.

"A mother has cherished us, tender and wise,  
And gathered us close in her sheltering arm ;  
A father has lovingly gazed in our eyes,  
And shielded us fondly from danger and harm.

"A home was once ours—it is ruined to-day,  
And burnt are our holiest treasures. Our best  
And dearest lie sleeping as cold as the clay,  
And exile and chains is the doom of the rest.

"Our country—you know it. 'Tis known, in a word,  
By hunting and harrying ever anew,  
By tumults and riots, by fire and sword,  
By torture and death to the suffering Jew.

"Yes, yes, we are Jews, and our sorrows ne'er cease,  
Jews, wretched and friendless, no end to our pain.  
Oh, ask us no further! Oh, leave us in peace!  
America drives us to Russia again.

"To Russia again, whence we fled in despair,  
To Russia, because of our penniless plight!  
What have we to hope for, or why should we care  
For life and its burden, for earth and its blight?

"Good cause have you all to lament and to fear,  
To shrink from the touch of death's conquering hand.  
You all have a home, that you seek and hold dear,  
Nor were you thrust forth from America's strand.

"We only are desolate. Earth, cold and stern,  
Begrudges us fiercely the home that we found.  
We journey, but no one awaits our return.  
Oh, tell us, I pray of you, whither we're bound.

"The tempest may rage, and the storm-wind hold sway,  
The seething abyss all its terrors reveal,  
For lost are we Jews, be the end what it may,  
And naught but the ocean our anguish can heal."

ALICE LUCAS.